



The Cleveland Museum of Art

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ART MUSEUM AND JAZZ SOCIETY PRESENT CLEVELAND DEBUT OF RON CARTER NONET

Jazz returns to The Cleveland Museum of Art on Saturday, February 4, 1995, at 8 pm, when the Ron Carter Nonet plays chamber jazz at its finest. The innovative nine-piece ensemble features bassist Carter with four cellos and a rhythm section. The concert is jointly sponsored by the Museum and the Northeast Ohio Jazz Society, with support from public radio station WCPN-FM.

Composer, arranger, author, recording artist, and educator Ron Carter has created and leads one of the most distinctive and unusual jazz groups ever heard: playing a specially tuned piccolo bass (half the size of a full-size bass), he is backed by piano, drums, percussion, bass, and a cello quartet. Critics say his "string-laden Nonet...plays with a robust, surging rhythm" (John S. Wilson, *New York Times*), and that Carter, "on piccolo bass produces long pianistic lines of utter clarity, along with rich guitar-like chording and dramatic sonorities" (John Detro, *JazzTimes*).

Playing with Carter for this concert are cellists Carol Buck, Mari Sol Espada, Kermit Moore, and Caryl Paisner; Ray Gallon on piano; Leon Maleson, bass; Payton Crossley, drums; and Steven Kroon, percussion. They blend blues-based jazz and the European classical tradition in such varied tunes as Leon Russell's "A Song for You," the traditional gospel hymn "Just a Closer Walk with Thee," Miles Davis's "So What," and Carter's own "Little Waltz."

Reporting this week about a tribute concert given in Carter's honor by jazz colleagues, Peter Watrous of the *New York Times* quoted bassist Ray Drummond: "Ron is a pivotal figure in the history of the instrument, and with Paul Chambers he shares a dominance in modern jazz....His musical sense of being in the right place at the right time is exceptional. There's nobody like him."

Tickets to the Ron Carter Nonet will be \$15, and are available at the Museum Store and Wax Stacks Records (Lee Road in Cleveland Heights), or by phone charge through NOJS at 397-9900. Members of the Museum, NOJS, or WCPN receive a \$2 discount.

A backgrounder on Ron Carter is appended to this release.

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The renowned Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra returns to The Cleveland Museum of Art on Thursday, March 9, at 8 pm, for a concert of live music and historic footage paying tribute to "The Majesty of Louis Armstrong." Tickets for this event go on sale January 17 also.

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These programs are made possible by the Lila Wallace-Readers' Digest National Jazz Network (a program of the New England Foundation for the Arts), the Cleveland and George Gund Foundations, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Ohio Arts Council.

Backgrounder on Ron Carter

Bassist

Ron Carter's reputation in the music world is virtually peerless. He more than capably accompanies any player or group and, without breaking stride, performs with stunning virtuosity as a soloist. His work is rich in detail, pure of sound, and technically impressive. Carter's long list of accolades as a performer is unprecedented; he may be the most popular bassist playing today.

The 57-year-old Carter displays an elegant calm on stage as well as off. He has created music with consummate skill for more than thirty years, apparently without rumpling his tasteful suits or raising a serious sweat. In the early 1960s, he performed throughout the United States in nightclubs and concert halls with Eric Dolphy, Jaki Byard, and Wes Montgomery, then toured Europe with Cannonball Adderley. He was a member of Miles Davis's now classic quintet from 1963 to 1968, along with Herbie Hancock, Tony Williams, and Wayne Shorter.

Carter was among the few bassists who continued to play acoustic bass when many turned to electric bass. "It was a conscious choice," he says. "I felt a responsibility to present a viable alternative to the popular electronic sound."

One of Carter's chief accomplishments has been to create bass lines so harmonically and rhythmically rich that soloists have had to respond to *his* challenge. As he puts it: "A good bassist determines the direction of any band." Often Carter uses gonglike tones and glissandos in his work. Once his trademark, these ringing notes have now become part of every modern bassist's arsenal.

When he first considered forming his own group, Carter met a new challenge. Traditionally, the bass was not considered a lead instrument. He found a solution in the piccolo bass, an instrument one-half the size of a full-size (4/4) bass. He tuned the instrument to bring out an unusual sound quality that stands out in an ensemble. Backed by a quartet of piano, drums, percussion, and an additional bass, Carter is out front and creates one of the most distinctive and unusual jazz formations ever heard.

Ron Carter has performed with the Black Composers Orchestra, the New World Symphony Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonia, and the Brooklyn Philharmonic.

Composer/Arranger/Author

Ron Carter won a Grammy award in 1988 for the instrumental composition, "Call Sheet Blues," from the movie *'Round Midnight*. He scored and arranged music for a number of other films including *Beatrice*, directed by Bertrand Tavernier; *Haraka*, directed by Ola Balogun; and television movies "Exit Ten," starring Peter Weller; and "A Gathering of Old Men," starring Richard Widmark and Louis Gossett, Jr.

He is author of *Building a Jazz Bass Line*, a series of books on playing jazz bass; *Ron Carter Comprehensive Bass Method*, for classical bass studies; *Ron Carter Bass Lines*; and *The Music of Ron Carter*, which contains 140 of his published and recorded compositions.

Recording Artist

With more than 1,000 albums to his credit, Carter may well be the world's most recorded bassist. Ron Carter's solo bass recording of the Bach Cello Suites on compact disc was Certified Gold in 1988. He is equally successful as a leader and a supportive collaborator, anchoring extraordinary and varied sessions with commanding technique and impeccable taste. He has recorded with many of the greatest names in music: Oliver Nelson, Tommy Flanagan, Gil Scott-Heron, Gil Evans, Lena Horne, James Brown, Coleman Hawkins, Bill Evans, Carlos Santana, Aretha Franklin, Sonny Rollins, Paul Simon, Janis Ian, Bette Midler, Benny Goodman, George Benson, B.B. King, Eric Gale, Johnny Hodges, Antonio Carlos Jobim, The Kronos Quartet, Dexter Gordon, and Helen Merrill.

His many awards include citations by the Japan All-Star Jazz Poll and the *Swing Journal* Readers Poll. He was voted Outstanding Bassist of the Decade by the *Detroit News* and Jazz Bassist of the Year by *Downbeat* magazine. Ron was also named Most Valuable Player, Acoustic Bass, by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

Educator & Spokesman

Carter earned a bachelor of music degree from the Eastman School of Music and a master's degree in double bass from the Manhattan School of Music, where he later returned to teach. He has lectured, conducted, and performed at clinics, instructed jazz ensembles, and taught the business of music at Wisconsin, Connecticut, Indiana, North Carolina, Rutgers, and Howard universities, among others, as well as at the Harlem School for the Arts. He is currently Professor of Music at the City College of New York.

"Education has always served to increase my awareness," says Carter. "Teaching helps me better understand what it is that I do. The students walk away with the history of string bass; they become more cognizant of jazz history. Also, their questions--about jazz publishing, copyright laws, and recording contracts--are answered firsthand."

Carter serves on the advisory board of the Jazz Musicians Association and is on the board of directors of the Harlem Jazz Music Center in New York City.